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Site Planning
Civil Engineering
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February 4, 2016

Ms. Jennifer R. Woods, Associate Planner
City of Issaquah - Development Services
City Hall Northwest
1775 12th Avenue NW
Issaquah, WA 98027

Re: 1404-WLD Issaquah Townhomes, CPH Project No. 0054-15-022
Design Criteria Narrative

Ms. Woods,

This narrative is provided to summarize compliance of the *1404-WLD Issaquah Townhomes* project with applicable City of Issaquah site development and sub-area plan design criteria. The applicable design standards for this project are contained within Issaquah Municipal Code (IMC) Chapter 18.07 and certain portions of the Central Issaquah Development and Design Standards (effective date December 22, 2015).

PROJECT OVERVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT DETAILS

The project site is a single real property totaling approximately 0.5 acres (21,478 sf) within the Gilman neighborhood of the City of Issaquah. It is zoned Mixed-Use Residential (MUR) and is also located within the sub-area planning area designated as the Central Issaquah Plan (CIP). The current site address is *775* 4th Avenue NW (King County tax parcel no. 884390-0445). A single-family residence, several outbuildings and a large commercial garage. These existing conditions are illustrated on the Existing Site Survey plan enclosed with the application. All structures on the property will be vacated and removed with the *1404-WLD Issaquah Townhomes* project.

The project proposes to develop eleven new, three-story attached single-family townhomes in two separate building footprints. Building W1 is a 5-plex fronting the east side of 5th Avenue Northwest and the other, Building E2, is a 6-plex with main entries facing 4th Avenue Northwest. Garage entries for each of the individual units face inward of the site toward a paved vehicular access drive. This private drive traverses the central portion of the site from an improved residential access approach at 5th Avenue. The buildings are 3-story with a maximum height of just over 40 feet, which is in-line with the 40-foot base height and much less than the 65-foot maximum specified by Table 4.4 of the CIP Development Standards. The attached single-family townhomes are an allowed use in the MUR zone.

Both street frontages are proposed to be improved to full half-street sections with the project. Direction for the two different widening sections was provided by City staff at the most recent pre-application meeting. Both frontages provide a 6-foot wide concrete sidewalk, curb, and gutter separated by a continuous landscape strip. The 5th Avenue frontage improvement also includes a short, parallel parking pullout area.

Low impact development (LID) techniques are proposed with the project to control storm water peak runoff rate increases from the improved site. These include minimum pavement widths to reduce impervious coverage and bioretention facilities integrated into site landscaping areas. All of the planter islands between individual unit garages are proposed to be installed as bioretention facilities. These features receive direct storm water runoff from the pollution generating surface of the paved private

driveway as well as discharge from the townhome building roofs. Preliminary hydrologic modelling confirms that the size of these LID facilities provide the necessary sensitive lake treatment standard as well as a sufficient attenuation to conform with flow control standards per City of Issaquah surface water requirements. A preliminary Technical Information Report for the project is included with this submittal to provide additional detail on the storm drainage design.

A common open space area is proposed along the northern portion of the site. This area will also serve as a public pedestrian corridor as required by certain provisions of the CIP. It will include a 5-foot wide concrete paved trail connecting existing and improved City sidewalks at 5th Avenue and 4th Avenue. A minimum vegetated buffer of four feet is provided each side of this trail. The landscape design for this pedestrian corridor and open space area intends to provide a natural and pleasing environment that encourages public use while also maintains privacy for the adjacent residences.

SITE DESIGN CONCEPTS AND APPLICABLE CRITERIA

Site design for the *1404-WLD Issaquah Townhomes* project has been developed with close consideration of the established character, recreation opportunities, and proximity of urban amenities near the downtown core that the Gilman neighborhood provides. It also considers the objectives of the CIP in its early implementation as priority over general code provisions for design considerations at the site. Compliance and consideration of the key design guidelines of the CIP effectively accomplish conformance with the applicable provisions of IMC 18.07. As such, the following discussions of site design are focused on comparisons with the criteria provided in Chapters 11, 12, 14, 15, and 16 with respect to the most pertinent features of the project.

CIRCULATION PRIORITIES Both buildings have been located nearest to and with primary entries facing the public right-of-way. Individual unit garages are oriented toward the center of the site where the building provide significant screening of vehicular activity and clear delineation of the pedestrian routes at the perimeter. The building orientation at the frontage of the site emphasize the pedestrian access priority.

SUSTAINABLE SITE DESIGN AND INTEGRATED STORMWATER FACILITIES The project proposes to integrate low impact development (LID) features into the site circulation and landscape. These include reduced driveway widths where practical and bioretention planter islands. Bioretention facilities incorporate plantings and a compost soil mixture to treat and store stormwater. Once established, these features have the appearance of a typical, healthy landscape area that can serve as an aesthetic feature with added benefit of softening the appearance of the hard pavement of the adjacent parking and driveway areas. Building construction is anticipated to include materials recycling.

EXISTING FEATURES, CONTEXT, VIEWS, AND VISTAS The east facing building (2E) has an unobstructed views of the Olde Town area and Tiger Mountain, as well as the open space of Bernsten Park which lies directly across the street. The building design provides for private outdoor deck areas at the rear façade of their units. Building 1W which faces westerly along the frontage of 5th Avenue has local vistas of an established tree-lined roadway.

CONNECTION TO SURROUNDING CIRCULATION FACILITIES AND ROUTES The roadway frontage improvements at 4th Avenue extends an existing City sidewalk system south. Frontage improvements at 5th Avenue will complete a missing segment of public sidewalk on the east side of this right-of-way to provide a continuous walking route form the north toward the school and business to the south. The proposed paved trail through the open space area at the north boundary will offer a mid-block connection between 4th and 5th Avenue sidewalk facilities and a more direct route to Bernsten Park.

EMPHASIZE LANDSCAPING The project proposes dense landscape buffers at the north and south perimeters. Landscaping design within the common open space/pedestrian corridor defines a distinct

and enjoyable route of travel for public use. Significant landscaping is proposed along all perimeters of the project site to provide a natural appearance and inviting environment for both the public pedestrian travelers and residents of the community.

PARKING AND DRIVE-THROUGH LOCATION The parking at the site is centrally located and mostly screened from the public right-of-way and active pedestrian facilities at the north perimeter of the site.

ESTABLISH BUILD-TO-LINE The proximity of and intentional orientation of the buildings toward the public right-of-way define a distinct build-to-line with landscaping softening the perimeter edge adjacent to the public sidewalk.

ABOVE-GROUND UTILITIES The current site design proposes to maintain above-ground utility features near the south boundary of the site at the end of the private drive. This area is furthest away from active pedestrian areas and away from visibility.

PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE FACILITIES The location and landscape design around the trail through the open space area clearly delineate and encourage pedestrian connection between 4th and 5th Avenues. An intentional plant palette and configuration of materials provides an effective buffer of between the public route and the private spaces onsite.

PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLINESS AND PRIORITY The private parking drive has been centralized and the width of its access to 5th Avenue minimized to optimize the perimeter areas of the site for pedestrian priority. Pedestrian traffic routes are clearly defined by hard surface materials clearly different from the adjacent roadway and driveway surfaces.

WALKWAY SEPARATION All of the improved frontage sidewalks and the concrete trail through the pedestrian corridor area are separated from vehicular areas by means of grade, curbs, or landscaping features.

BUILDINGS REINFORCE PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT The buildings are designed with a respect to the human scale and proximity to the adjacent public walkway through the use of appropriately scaled materials and building modulation. The ground floor residential units are raised slightly above the level of the sidewalk to provide a sense of privacy while maintaining a connection to the public. The primary entry of the townhome units are located adjacent to and engaging with the public pedestrian priority circulation systems along 4th and 5th Avenue. Each unit entry provides a raised porch 6' wide by 5' deep that is completely covered for weather protection and recessed from the front façade of the building. This provides an emphasis to the unit entry and a private space for each unit while enabling easy access to and interaction with the public sidewalk. The importance of the street facing façade of the building is achieved through a change in building materials and details from the end and rear elevations while keeping with a similar unifying building design. Building modulations and façade details clearly distinguish the individual townhome units resulting in reducing the apparent mass of the combined structure.

GROUND LEVEL DETAILS The buildings implement an open design at the main entries facing the street. There are no gates or fences proposed. These primary entrances facing the street frontage are directly visible and accessible from the public roadway and sidewalk area at both 4th Avenue and 5th Avenue. Evergreen species are proposed along the frontage perimeters to maintain year-round interest. Each of the units has small private outdoor spaces between their entry and the back of sidewalk.

LANDSCAPE SOFTEN DEVELOPMENT Site landscaping design has been provided at varying density and heights to soften the north and south ends of the buildings.

ACCENT PLANTINGS AND TREES ON SITE A distinct pattern/theme of plantings has been designed along the edge of the paved public trail through the common open space area to frame and emphasize that pedestrian route.

PEDESTRIAN BUFFER The pedestrian corridor area has been landscaped to provide an effective buffer from surrounding properties and vehicular traffic areas. The plantings in this area have a variety of size and species to create visual interest.

CIRCULATION FACILITY LANDSCAPES Site landscape design includes prominent street trees and an understory of low growing landscaping as does the trail through the pedestrian corridor. This theme is consistent and supportive of the Green Necklace vision for the CIP.

Please, feel free to contact me directly if you have questions or require additional information to complete your review and processing of the ASDP. I very much appreciate your time and efforts. Our team looks forward to working with you through the successful completion of the *1404-WLD Issaquah Townhomes* project. Thank you.

Sincerely,

CPH Consultants

Matthew J. Hough, PE
President

Enclosures

Cc: Ms. Melanie Clark (1404-WLD Issaquah Townhomes, LLC
Copy to file